



KEEP **GREASE** OUT OF THE SYSTEM

Limitations on the use of Chemicals, Enzymes and Bacteria for grease removal



CHEMICALS: The use of chemicals to clean grease traps or interceptors is strictly prohibited!

- Your local sewer use ordinance prohibits the use of chemicals as a cleaning method to dissolve grease from your grease removal devices. Specifically, cleaners, solvents, caustics, or other chemicals cannot be used to dissolve accumulated grease from your grease trap or grease interceptor. Discharging certain regulated chemicals into the sewer system can negatively affect the pH of the sewer stream, and may result in violation of local, state, and federal codes.



ENZYMES: The use of enzymes to clean grease traps or interceptors is strictly prohibited!

- Whether produced synthetically or from animals, enzymes are considered to be chemicals. Enzymes cannot be used to dissolve grease from your grease removal device.
- Enzymes may temporarily alter the chemical form of the grease, allowing it to “dissolve” into the water. However, the altered grease will often reform into an obstructing or viscous solid matter in sewer pipes. This altered grease may still result in a violation of the 150 parts per million oil and grease limit in your local sewer use ordinance.



BACTERIA: Bacteria use enzymes to “eat” grease, but bacteria use is problematic and is not a substitute for physically removing grease.

- Bacteria need a stable environment and are sensitive to changes in temperature, pH, oil and grease loading, water flow changes, etc. It is hard to maintain the conditions necessary for bacteria to work in a kitchen environment. Biological expertise and ongoing sampling are often needed to sustain bacteria.
- Even if your bacteria survive and flourish, their effectiveness in removing grease is limited. “Partially eaten” (i.e., not broken down completely) grease may still enter the plumbing and sewer pipes, reforming into an obstructing (viscous) solid matter over time.

Note:

BE WARY...
of vendors claiming their additives are “approved” or otherwise legal.

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In general...

- Greasy wastewater **cannot** be discharged to the sanitary sewer system. Your local sewer use ordinance states:

"No person shall discharge, cause, allow, or permit to be discharged into the sanitary sewer system any liquid or other waste containing floatable and/or dispersed grease, vegetable oil, petroleum oil, non-biodegradable cutting oil, or fat, oil, or grease or products of animals, vegetable or mineral origin, in excess of 150 part per million by weight."

- Floating or solid grease matter must be physically removed from your grease removal device by pumping, scraping, scooping, etc.

- You are expected to maintain your grease removal devices in efficient operating condition by periodic removal of accumulated grease. The use of chemicals, enzymes, or bacteria should not be used as a substitute for physically removing grease. Your local sewer use ordinance states:

"Grease removal devices shall be maintained in efficient operating condition by periodic removal of the accumulated grease. The use of chemicals to dissolve grease is specifically prohibited. No accumulated grease shall be introduced into any drainage piping or public or private sewer. Users with oil and grease removal devices must maintain them in good operating condition at all times."

- The **minimum cleaning frequency** required for **grease interceptors** installed for food service facilities is **quarterly**. However, more frequent cleaning intervals may be necessary to prevent your grease interceptor from operating poorly or improperly.
- The **minimum cleaning frequency** required for **grease traps** installed in food service facilities is **monthly**. However, more frequent cleaning intervals may be necessary to prevent your grease trap from operating poorly or improperly.

SAN JOSE/SANTA CLARA
WATER POLLUTION
CONTROL PLANT
(408) 945-3000

Tributary agencies served by the treatment plant: San José, Santa Clara, Milpitas, Cupertino Sanitary District, West Valley Sanitation District (including Campbell, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Saratoga), County Sanitation Districts 2-3, Sunol & Burbank Sanitary Districts.



Environmental Services

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, City of San José Environmental Services Department materials can be made available upon request in alternative formats, such as Braille, large print, audiotape or computer disk. Requests may be made by calling (408) 945-3000 (voice) or (800) 735-2929 (California Relay Service).